



NEWS RELEASE

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Public Forum Set for Small Business Owners to Comment on Federal Regulatory Enforcement

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. -- Small business owners, lenders, community leaders and representatives of trade associations in North Florida who are concerned about excessive enforcement of federal rules can voice their complaints at a **U.S. Small Business Administration Regulatory Fairness Roundtable Discussion in Jacksonville, Florida on Friday, April 11, 2008 from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm.**

The forum will be held at the SBA North Florida District Office Large Conference Room, 7825 Baymeadows Way; Suite 100B, Jacksonville, FL 32256.

SBA National Ombudsman Nicholas Owens will hear comments and complaints about regulatory enforcement and compliance and will discuss the impact of federal regulations on small business.

“One of the leading concerns small business owners face is unfair enforcement of federal regulations. They also worry about telling their stories because they fear retaliation by federal agencies,” Owens said. “Small business owners want to play by the rules and comply with federal regulations. We want to encourage Federal regulators to provide effective compliance assistance, rather than go straight to the penalty stage. Regulatory enforcement should be effective, not excessive.”

This forum offers small business owners a chance to express their concerns about federal compliance practices and to learn how to more effectively deal with federal regulatory requirements.

Comments and complaints presented during this forum will be directed to the appropriate federal regulatory agency. This information will also be shared with federal officials in the National Ombudsman’s Annual Report to Congress, and with leadership of federal regulatory agencies to assist them with their enforcement actions.

The forum is open to the public. Members of the small business community, trade organizations and media are encouraged to attend. **Mandatory RSVP: RSVPs should be made to SBA North Florida District Office at 904-443-1933 or by email at lola.naylor@sba.gov before the forum.** Small business owners or representatives unable to attend can contact the National Ombudsman for further assistance.

Comments and concerns about federal enforcement actions can be addressed directly to SBA’s Office of the National Ombudsman at 1-888-734-3247 (REGFAIR). For more information about the National Ombudsman and this forum, please visit the web site www.sba.gov/ombudsman.